

Joggers take note, coral snakes seen on new jogging trail

By Tom Marshburn
Since the opening of the new jogging trail, coral snake sightings at JSC has increased. Typically two-three feet long, these brightly colored snakes have a characteristic color pattern of red stripes bordered by yellow bands. They like warm, dry surfaces near creeks or lakes, and have been spotted by joggers under or near leaves on the paved

running surface near the Gilruth Center, the perimeter fence trail in particular. They are secretive, and do not bite unless handled or provoked. While the bites are typically not very painful, the venom is dangerous. It may produce a sensation of numbness and tingling near the bite site in 30 minutes to 24 hours. Any bite may contain venom, and may require immedi-

ate treatment with anti-venin. Treatment can begin at the JSC Clinic or the nearby hospital's emergency departments. Attempts to suck out the venom with or without an incision may do more harm than good, and can delay proper medical care. This advice applies to a bite from any venomous snake. If bitten by a coral snake, it is important to seek medical attention right away. Emergency help is

always accessible by calling x33333. Coral snake envenomation is very rare, and accounts for only .5 percent of snake bites in the U.S. Still, as always, the best treatment is prevention. So, keep an eye out when on the JSC jogging trails, especially in the afternoon during the spring and fall, and if a coral snake is seen lying around, it is best to leave it alone.



Above: Acting JSC Director George Abbey, right, places the first toy in the Bldg. 3 cafeteria barrel to kick-off the "Toys for Tots" program at JSC. Joining Abbey from left are Capt. Christopher Ashby, astronaut candidate Rick Sturkow, Sgt. Todd Saxon, Gunnery Sgt. Samuel Helms and Santa Claus (a.k.a. Clay Anderson, chief of the Flight Design Branch in the Flight Design and Dynamics Division). Staff Sgt. Mark Chamberlain, not pictured, also joined the other Marines to help kick-off the program. Bottom: Pioneer Contract Services employee Dorothy Harryman, right, and Judy Guy of the Support Operations Division check gifts collected in Bldg. 419. Gift request provided by Bank One were given to employees of children ranging in age from infant to teens. Clothes and toys were collected and delivered to the bank for distribution.

JSC generosity abundant to local community

By Karen Schmidt
The spirit of the Christmas season was abundant within the JSC workforce this year. While holiday decorations adorned nearly every building and some areas of the JSC grounds, both civil servants and contractor employees opened their hearts to needy families in the community. Employees found several ways to adopt-a-family or buy presents for needy children. The "Toys for Tots" program collected more than 100 toys in the Bldg. 3 cafeteria in just over a week for the U.S. Marines to distribute around Houston.

The Environmental Health staff of Kesley-Sebold adopted a family of seven through The Bridge and collected a variety of toys clothes and personal items to brighten the family's holiday season.

Employees in the Mission Operations Directorate Business Management Office found a family in LaMarque through the United Way. This family of four children lived with their grandparents because their mother was murdered last year. The children—ranging in age from 12 months to 17 years—received toys, clothes and food. The 8-year-old boy of the family received a bicycle from the JSC workers.

The entire third floor of Bldg. 7A filled wish lists from the Salvation Army Wish Tree. Employees from the Crew and Thermal Systems Division, Hamilton-Standard, ILC and Lockheed employees gathered 60 presents to donate to children in the Houston area.

The Space News Roundup staff was informed by a source at the North Pole that other employees also donated their time, money and gifts to others in need around Houston. While the SNR was unable to learn all the details, the source commended all JSC employees on their generous spirit during the holiday season.



Santa's dinghy



Astronaut Steve Smith and daughter

Mission control open for viewing

The Mission Control Center viewing room will be open to JSC and contractor badged employees and their families during portions of the STS-72 mission.

Employees will be allowed to visit the MCC from 1-5 p.m. Saturday and 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Wednesday.

Employees must wear their badges and escort family members through the lobby of Bldg. 30 South. Children under five will not be permitted. No flash photography or loud talking will be permitted at any time. Because of the dynamic nature of shuttle mission, viewing hours may be changed or canceled without notice.

For the latest information on the schedule, call the Employee Information Service at x36765.

New device removes deadly carbon monoxide

Homeowners everywhere someday soon may be protected from deadly carbon monoxide fumes, thanks to a device invented at Langley Research Center.

The device uses a new class of low-temperature oxidation catalysts to convert carbon monoxide to non-toxic carbon dioxide at room temperature. It also can remove formaldehyde fumes. The catalysts initially were developed for research involving carbon dioxide lasers.

Industry already has shown an interest in the device. Rochester Gas and Electric Co. in Rochester, N.Y., has an agreement with Langley to develop a product for use in homes, cars and aircraft.

The Mantic Corp. of Salt Lake City plans to use them in breathing apparatus, such as firefighter masks. The catalysts also have applications as trace-gas detectors and in cold-engine emission control.

To work, the catalysts are applied to a surface; air passing over the surface reacts with the catalysts, transforming carbon monoxide and formaldehyde. The device requires no energy for operation, doesn't need to be plugged in, has no moving parts and lasts a long time.

Russian language classes available

Russian language classes from basic beginners to advanced classes are now available.

The classes are conducted in the evenings at Clear Lake United Methodist Church, 16335 El Camino Real. The cost is \$108 for 10 weeks. Beginner class meets at 6 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays. Advanced Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced classes meet one night each week for two hours. New students may enroll through the week of Jan 22. For information, call Susan Crippen at x42245.

Government leaders continue to discuss budget this week

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economic forecasts. His plan would cut \$102 billion from Medicare—about half what Republicans proposed—and offer a tax cut of only \$87 billion, compared to \$240 billion in the GOP plan. The White House would increase the size of its proposed tax cut if the economy performs well.

Although the President had delivered a concrete balanced budget plan, Republicans have expressed opposition to the specific spending allocations. They warned that without a completed budget deal, they again may shut down parts of the government when the continuing resolutions expire on Jan. 26. Talks between President Clinton and

Congressional leaders resumed Monday.

The Office of Personnel Management issued a detailed set of instructions Jan. 6 that will guide all federal agencies in the way they handle timekeeping and payroll issues. Detailed instructions are being prepared for center timekeepers to support payroll process-

ing activities.

Employees who were directed to stay at home during the furlough will be paid "as though they had performed work for the agency during all periods of regularly scheduled duty."

During the furlough, employees were advanced the money they earned during the first week of the

Dec. 11-22 pay period. All civil servants are expected to receive the remainder of that pay period's salary, minus normal deductions such as taxes and insurance, by today. The following pay period's checks, which normally would have been mailed out or deposited electronically by Jan. 16., will be delivered no later than Jan. 18.

Gemini 7-6 celebrates 30th anniversary

The 30th anniversary of Gemini 7-6, and the first rendezvous and docking of two manned spacecraft, will be celebrated Jan. 26 at the Gilruth Center.

Coordinator Bob Legler is seeking help in locating individuals that worked on Gemini 76 and the Gemini program, including operations, program and engineering.

"We are asking everyone to search their archives for trivia that we may

show at the party," Legler said. "Also I have video and slides that will run continuously around the ballroom."

A short program that recognizes various groups of people is planned and coordinators are offering short time slots for representatives from each group to say a few words, present slides or recognize individuals who were significant to the success of the rendezvous.

Tickets are now on sale for \$5 and

may be purchased from the following volunteers: Bob Becker 282-2794, Ken Young 335-6095 and Bob Legler x35406 located in Bldg. 1, Rm. 878; Jo Corey Bldg. 4N, Rm. 153; Alice Van Guilder Bldg. 4N, Rm. 309; Oma Cross Bldg. 30A, Rm. 1012A; Norma McMinimy at the Loral Bldg. behind the old Sakowitz mall and Ken Young of Rockwell at 600 Gemini. For more information call Legler at x35406.

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Resource center to be open daily

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combined staff offers research assistance and are operated by Media Services Corp.

The JSC Media Resources Center will be open from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. Off-site customers will access the MRC through the main gate, where they will be badged and directed to Bldg. 423. For information call x34231.